

DDR-102-62

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

18 April 1962

SUBJECT: National Security Council Meeting, 18 April 1962, 12:15 p. m.

The following three items on the Nuclear Atmospheric Testing Program were included on the Agenda for the subject meeting:

a. Proposed Polaris and Atlas systems proof tests: The Secretary of Defense strongly recommended the Polaris test saying this was vital for proving out the most critical element in our retaliatory capability. He reserved any recommendation on the Atlas test since he had some personal doubts about the desirability and had not yet made a decision on whether to recommend its conduct. He pointed out that it had little relationship to proving out our actual retaliatory capability and would involve considerable political risk. General Lemnitzer strongly endorsed both tests. There was no other discussion and the President decided to approve the Polaris test and hold up decision on the Atlas until the Secretary of Defense was prepared to recommend it.

b. Proposed 2 KT surface test in Nevada: All agreed that this was of high priority; the only question being certain internal political difficulties which might result when it was conducted. It was agreed that this test should be carried out but preferably at the end of the series so as not to prejudice any of the other tests.

c. Timing and announcement of the opening of the test series: It was agreed that the announcement would be made by the AEC after the first shot had been conducted. The timing would be given directly to the Chairman of the AEC by the President at the last possible moment in order to keep to a minimum possibilities of leaks. Announcement would not occur on Easter Monday; preferably Tuesday, Wednesday or later after the Disarmament Conference had reconvened.

O-Director

1-D/DCI

1-Asst. to DD/I (NSC)

EYES ONLY

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HERBERT SCOVILLE, JR.  
Deputy Director  
(Research)

DDRHS:djm

Approved For Release 2001/08/27 : CIA-RDP66R00638R000100090169-8

DD/R Subject - Nuclear testing

(OSI sent informal copy to note & destroy)

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